1. An inductive element for an ICP source comprising;

a conductor formed of a sheet of electrically conductive material formed into at least one loop having shaped edges defining a plurality of segments including segments from each of a plurality of differing geometries.

2. The inductive element of claim **1** wherein:

the shaped edges of the conductor are configured to segments of alternating geometries around an axis of the element and a current path at alternating radii around the axis.

3. The inductive element of claim **1** wherein:

the segments each having a thickness and a width defining an aspect ratio of width to thickness;

a segment of one geometry having an aspect ratio that is relatively high with respect to a segment of another geometry.

4. The inductive element of claim **1** wherein:

the conductor is formed of a sheet of highly electrically-conductive material;

the segments each having approximately the same thickness and being of at least two different widths defining different aspect ratios of width to thickness;

a segment of one geometry having an aspect ratio that is relatively high with respect to a segment of another geometry.

5. The inductive element of claim **1** wherein:

the conductor has a plurality of cutouts therein defining a series of the segments forming a current carrying path.

6. The inductive element of claim **5** wherein:

the conductor has a plurality of gaps therein, each interrupting a shorter one of current paths around one of the cutouts.

7. The inductive element of claim **5** wherein:

the conductor is an annular sheet split along a radius thereof at one point on its circumference, providing ends of the conductor for connection across an RF power source.

8. The inductive element of claim **7** wherein:

the conductor has a shape selected from the group consisting of generally planar, generally cylindrical, generally spherical, and generally conical.

9. The inductive element of claim **1** wherein:

the conductor is formed of a sheet of highly electrically-conductive material;

the segments each having a thickness and a width defining an aspect ratio of width to thickness;

a segment of one geometry having an aspect ratio that is relatively high with respect to a segment of another geometry;

the conductor has a plurality of cutouts therein defining a series of the segments of different aspect ratios forming a current carrying path.

10. The inductive element of claim **9** wherein:

the cutouts are arranged in one or more circles.

11. The inductive element of claim **9** wherein:

the cutouts are spaced around one or more circles at approximately equally circumferentially spaced intervals.

12. An ICP source comprising the inductive element of claim **1** and further comprising:

the inductive element being outside of the chamber and generally congruent to the dielectric wall and having a width and a longitudinal extent generally parallel to the dielectric wall and having a thickness generally perpendicular to the dielectric wall.

13. An ICP apparatus comprising the inductive element of claim **1** and further comprising:

a vacuum processing chamber having a dielectric wall; and

the inductive element being outside of the chamber and generally congruent to the dielectric wall and having a width and a longitudinal extent generally parallel to the dielectric wall and having a thickness generally perpendicular to the dielectric wall.

14. An ICP apparatus comprising:

a vacuum processing chamber having a dielectric wall;

an inductive element outside of the chamber and generally congruent to the dielectric wall and having a width and a longitudinal extent generally parallel to the dielectric wall and having a thickness generally perpendicular to the dielectric wall;

the inductive element being formed of a sheet of electrically-conductive material having a series of segments of differing aspect ratios;

an RF generator; and

a matching network connected between the inductive element and the RF generator.

15. A method of inductively coupling energy into a plasma of a processing apparatus, the method comprising:

providing an inductive element outside of the chamber and generally congruent with a dielectric wall of the chamber;

energizing the inductive element with an RF generator matched to the element; and

spatially distributing the plasma around an axis of the chamber with alternating segments of the element having differing geometries defined by shaped edges of the conductor.

16. The method claim **15** wherein:

the spatially distributing the plasma includes inductively coupling energy from lower cross-section segments of the element into a segmented ring of plasma density concentrations distributed around an axis of the chamber.

17. The method claim **15** wherein:

the spatially distributing the plasma includes inductively coupling energy from lower cross-section segments of the element in a plurality of rings having different radii from an axis of the chamber.

18. The method claim **15** wherein:

the element has a width and a longitudinal extent generally parallel to the dielectric wall and having a thickness generally perpendicular to the dielectric wall; and

the inductive element is formed of a sheet of electrically-conductive material having a series of segments of differing aspect ratios.

19. The method claim **15** wherein:

the spatially distributing the plasma includes affecting the path of the current in the inductive element formed of a sheet material by an array of cutouts in the material defining higher and lower cross-section segments of the element and the radii of the segments from an axis of the chamber.

20. The method claim **15** further comprising:

shaping the edges of the inductive element to form a current path in the element having a plurality of oscillations around an axis of the chamber.